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Lobby recognizes Senator's reforms

By **MELINDA FANCHER**

Lariat Reporter

A citizens lobby devoted to campaign reform named Waco's state senator as Texas' "Legislator of the Year" at its state conference Saturday, the group's executive director said Tuesday.

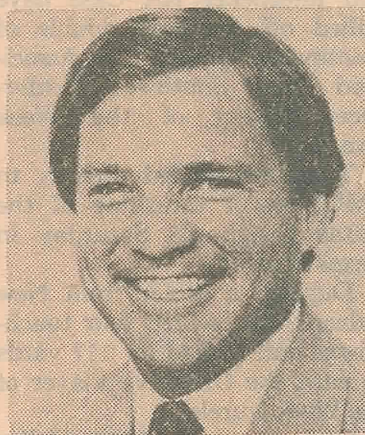
John Hildreth, director, said the Texas chapter of Common Cause named Sen. Chet Edwards, D-Duncanville, "Legislator of the Year" because of his commitment to open government and election reform.

"Common Cause awards a legislator because of his commitment to public policy concerning openness, honesty and accountability," Hildreth said. "We chose a legislator who best reflects those characteristics and we believe that Chet Edwards has embodied all of those qualities".

Edwards was chairman of an interim Election Code Study Committee. He also sponsored a presidential primary bill that would have moved the Democratic presidential primary to Super Tuesday, the second Tuesday in March.

Edwards said he sponsored the bill because he believes Texans want to play a larger role in the selection of presidential candidates.

"I think Texans are tired of



CHET EDWARDS

playing second fiddle to smaller states like New Hampshire and Iowa in the selection of presidential candidates," Edwards said Friday.

By the time candidates begin to campaign in Texas, their campaign issues often concentrate on issues important to voters in the Northeast, Edwards said.

"By participating in 'Super Tuesday' Texans will move from the back seat into the driver's seat in the selection of presidential candidates," Edwards said.

Most people believe the individual parties can set their own primary dates, Edwards said.

"People always say, 'Let the party decide this,' but what they don't know is that the party has no say," Edwards said.